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SUBJECT: MOLDOVA: 2008 COUNTRY REPORT ON TERRORISM

¶1. Moldova is not a safe haven for terrorists or terrorist groups. No acts of international terrorism of major significance have occurred in Moldova. Moldova is not designated as a state sponsor of terrorism. The Moldovan government continued to manage its counterterrorism strategy based on Moldova's 2003-2008 National Action Plan on Combating Terrorism.

¶2. Moldovan support for counterterrorism in 2008 included the deployment of servicemen to Iraq for humanitarian demining operations. The Moldovan demining contingent consisting of twenty personnel will return home in late December 2008. The Moldovan Ministry of Defense has one liaison officer deployed to CENTCOM headquarters. In 2008, Embassy Chisinau and the Moldovan government, specifically the Ministry of Internal Affairs, did not conduct any joint counterterrorism training exercises like those which had been done the previous year.

¶3. Moldova continued to work on implementation of its obligations under UNSCR 1373, Executive Order 13224 (the Terrorism Finance Executive Order), and provisions related to terrorist financing. The Moldovan government openly welcomes information regarding terrorist financing from the USG and other bodies and actively applies such information in its monitoring efforts through its Center for Combating Economic Crimes and Corruption (CCECC). One development in 2008 which will aid Moldova's counterterrorism efforts is its joining of the Egmont Group of financial intelligence units on May 20.

¶4. In 2008, the CCECC issued a decree regarding actions to be taken to enforce the provisions of the Law on Preventing and Combating Money Laundering and Terrorism. The CCECC decree listed entities worthy of particular focus due to possible money laundering and/or terrorist financing concerns. These entities include countries that do not have legal provisions against terrorist financing, and persons, groups, and entities identified as participating in terrorist activities. The decree was developed on the basis of Moldova's national interests and from U.S. and UN lists of designated terrorists.

¶5. On December 5, the Moldovan parliament ratified a blueprint on cooperation with the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) states in combating terrorism. This document was originally signed in August 2005 and provides for joint measures aimed at the prevention and counter-action of terrorism and extremism. The document allows for the

exchange of information on combating terrorism between CIS states, and provides for the extradition of persons suspected of financing or committing terrorist actions. The Moldovan parliament also ratified the specific program on CIS member states' cooperation in combating terrorism and extremism for 2008-2010. This three-year program reflects the activities which were included in the blueprint.

¶6. The separatist-controlled Transnistria region of Moldova remained a potential area of concern. Moldovan law enforcement worked hard to track the whereabouts and activities of individuals moving in and out of Transnistria, an area where central-government police and security services are rarely able to operate. Some of these individuals moving in and out of Transnistria were foreign students who remained in Moldova illegally, as the government lacked the resources to deport them when their visas expired. Corruption was endemic, and it was easy to obtain false travel documents in both Transnistria and Moldova. Embassy could not ascertain whether formal or informal cooperation on counterterrorism between Moldova and the separatist region of Transnistria took place.

¶7. The U.S. Embassy does not maintain liaison relationships or contacts with Transnistrian law enforcement and/or security service personnel. Embassy Chisinau requested informally a meeting with Transnistrian public-security personnel, but has received no response. To date, the United States has not obtained any information about known terrorist organizations or terrorists operating from or within this region.

¶8. Law enforcement and intelligence officials had the authority to intercept wire, oral, and electronic communications, but the investigator was required first to obtain prosecutorial concurrence and authorization from a judge. A specific section in the Prosecutor General's Office would handle any terrorism-related case. The primary investigative body in counterterrorism cases is the Information and Security Service (SIS), Moldova's intelligence service. In 2006, SIS was given the governmental lead to establish and manage a special Counterterrorism Center. Substantial assistance from the American Embassy's law enforcement assistance programs aid Moldovan efforts to impede the ability of terrorists and other citizens without proper documents to cross national borders. The programs also facilitated automation at ports of entry to ensure greater security of passports and travel documents.

CHAUDHRY